

Clerk of District Court

Department Overview

The Clerk of District Court is an elected office, serving a four-year term. The Clerk is responsible for the data input of legal filings and the attending and taking of minutes for all Court hearings for the three District Courts. FY 07 sees the full effects of the increase in the number of courts from two to three effective on January 1, 2006.

The District Court receives documents from the two lower Courts on appeals or transfers because of money amounts asked for or because of the restrictions placed on the lower Courts as to the kind of cases that may be heard. The Clerk of District Court is responsible for all statutory requirements associated with case filings and has to be knowledgeable with Montana laws.

The Clerk of District Court is specifically required by law to sign orders in probate cases, judgments in civil cases and to issue bench warrants, summons, and subpoenas. The Clerk of District Court is also appointed as the Jury Commissioner to summon Jurors and to pay the costs for Jurors, as well as for all witnesses that qualify for Criminal Trials. The Clerk of District Court issues Marriage Licenses along with Genealogy research, Child Support collection, maintenance and property settlement monies, Criminal Bail Bonds, fines and restitution payments, receives and invests monies tendered into Court in Civil Law Suits.

For FY 06 the Clerk requested the addition of two positions, both were funded effective 12/1/05. For FY 07 the positions are shown as full time regular employees.

The FY 07 Final Budget transfers funding of the Clerk of District Court to the County General Fund. This change will allow the elimination of the District Court Fund

Department Goals

- To provide outstanding, dedicated professional legal assistance to the Public, District Court Judges, attorneys, victims and perpetrator.
- Maintain accurate and easily accessible records.
- Be the link between the public and the Judges.
- Provide professional and courteous access to the courts.

Recent Accomplishments

- Office divided into specific areas of knowledge to increase expertise and accountability;
- Instituted system of peer review reducing the number of errors.
- Developed process to maintain effectiveness and increased efficiency to deal with an increase of 762 cases filed between 2000 and 2005.
- Support an increase of 14,416 documents processed from 2000 to 2005.
- Files have been reviewed and 'old discovery' has been disposed of, with new discovery being processed when received.
- Records have been organized and databases created, updated and maintained for office.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Clerk of District Court

Department Budget

Object of Expenditure	Actual FY 2005	Final FY 2006	Actual FY 2006	Request FY 2007	Preliminary FY 2007	Final FY 2007
Personnel	\$ 471,699	\$ 554,902	494,185	\$ 575,373	\$ 610,986	\$ 606,497
Operations	112,694	168,028	108,812	170,661	170,661	170,661
Debt Service	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Outlay	-	4,000	4,000	-	-	-
Transfers Out	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	\$ 584,393	\$ 726,930	\$ 568,636	\$ 746,034	\$ 781,647	\$ 777,158

Budget by Fund Group

General Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 777,158
Special Revenue Funds	584,393	726,930	568,636	746,034	781,647	-
Debt Service Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Project Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enterprise Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Internal Service Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trust & Agency Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	\$ 584,393	\$ 726,930	\$ 568,636	\$ 746,034	\$ 781,647	\$ 777,158

Funding Sources

Tax Revenues	\$ 350,069	\$ 387,782	\$ 383,904	\$ 387,782	\$ 183,469	\$ 183,469
Non-Tax Revenues	71,214	78,886	81,505	79,136	35,000	84,337
Cash Reappropriated	163,110	180,682	103,227	279,116	563,178	509,352
Total	\$ 584,393	\$ 647,350	\$ 568,636	\$ 746,034	\$ 781,647	\$ 777,158

Department Personnel

Personnel Summary

No	FT/PT	Title	FTE
1	Full-Time	Clerk of District Court	1.00
1	Full-Time	Chief Deputy Clerk of Court	1.00
1	Full-Time	Dist. Crk Clk II/Acctg Clk III	1.00
11	Full-Time	District Court Clerk I	11.00
1	Full-Time	File Clerk	1.00
Total Program FTE			15.00

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2007 Budget Highlights

Personnel

- No Change from FY 06, except full year funding of two positions that started December of 2005.

Operations

- Jury Costs are funded at \$79,580 within the District Court Activity. Increase in Printing resulted from establishment of revolving copier account

Capital

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County Commission Goals/Department Response

The County Commission established a set of overarching goals for the county government. Listed below are the County Commission's goals, followed by the methods by which the Clerk of District Court is striving to fulfill those goals.

Exceptional Customer Service

- Customers receive kind and respectful service – 95% satisfaction – based on Comment card responses.
- Accurate information provided – Complete procedures manual by 7-1-06.
- Documents and requests processed in a timely and efficient manner – Written priority system completed and provided to employees.
- Court documents promptly transferred to recipients – 75% of documentation transmitted electronically.

Be Model for Excellence in Government

- Use best practices from throughout the state – contact other offices – implement three-year plan.
- Error free documents – 100% free of errors – errors tracked by type, employee and percentage.
- Technological upgrades – Research current and forthcoming systems.

Improve Communications

- Open electronic communication established – 100% information transferred where interest exists.
- Awareness of customer and employee satisfaction – Suggestion box – review of suggestions.
- Proactive planning for future space and staff needs – Information and requests received from Employees in December for inclusion in budget.

To be the Employer of Choice

- Two way responsive communication – Employee satisfaction survey – low employee turnover.
- Positive atmosphere – employee evaluations completed annually.
- Learning Opportunities – Improve employee knowledge and growth.

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WORKLOAD INDICATORS/PERFORMANCE MEASURERS

Workload Indicators

Indicator	Actual FY 2004	Actual 2005	Estimate FY 2006	Projected FY 2007
1 . Track processing times	1-2 weeks	2-3 days	1-2 days	1-2 days
2 . Number of case filings(Jan-Dec courts)	3,073	3,124	3,276	3,428
3 . Track comments/suggestions			38	40
4 . Number of documents precessed (Jan-Dec courts)	46,665	48,275	50,677	53,079

Performance Measures

Measure	Actual FY 2004	Actual FY 2005	Estimate FY 2006	Projected FY 2007
1 . Suggestions implemented within 2 weeks			90%	90%
2 . Technology upgrades-GJCMS/ACCESS			100%	100%
3 . Computerized procedure manual implemented			50%	100%
4 . Employee training sessions-per employee			24 hrs	24 hrs
5 . Ongoing in-house training-per employee			24 hrs	48 hrs
6 . Error validation			90%	95%
7 . Customer Comment Card with 95% or better positive				

Commentary

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